



News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

NUMBER:
FOR RELEASE:
<http://www.cdph.ca.gov>

PH07-37
IMMEDIATE

DATE: October 2, 2007
CONTACT: Suanne Buggy
or Norma Arceo
(916) 440-7259

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH URGES CALIFORNIANS TO GET IMMUNIZED AGAINST THE FLU

SACRAMENTO – Dr. Mark Horton, director of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), today urged Californians who want protection from the flu to get immunized in order to prevent sickness, hospitalization and health complications resulting from the flu.

“This year we are anticipating a plentiful supply of influenza vaccine,” Horton said. “Flu season is soon approaching, and it’s time to schedule flu vaccination for you and your family members.”

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and CDPH recommend that the following groups receive vaccinations:

- Adults aged 50 and older.
- All women who will be pregnant during influenza season.
- Children 6 months to 5 years of age.
- Residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities.
- Healthcare workers with direct patient care. New law requires acute care hospitals to offer vaccine to all employees free of charge.
- Individuals with underlying chronic medical conditions.
- Individuals who live with or care for an elderly and a child less than 5 years of age.

Children younger than 9 years of age getting a flu vaccine for the first time will need two doses of vaccine. Healthy individuals ages 2 to 49 can now receive the nasal-spray flu vaccine, also known as Flumist®.

“Flu can be especially dangerous for young children, seniors, pregnant women and people with chronic illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes or asthma,” Horton said. “Getting vaccinated against the flu can help reduce absences from school and work.”

Every year, more than 225,000 people are hospitalized and more than 35,000 die in the United States due to influenza and its complications.

To stop the spread of influenza and other respiratory illnesses, Horton encouraged Californians to take the following basic steps:

- Stay home when you are sick to avoid spreading illness to co-workers and friends.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue and properly dispose of used tissues.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer to get rid of most germs and avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Stay healthy by eating a balanced diet, drinking plenty of water and getting adequate rest and exercise.

Horton also reminded parents and caregivers to use acetaminophen or ibuprofen instead of aspirin when treating fever and aches in children and teenagers. Aspirin has been linked to Reye's syndrome, a rare childhood disease which can lead to coma, brain damage and even death.

For information about low- and no-cost flu vaccines, consumers should contact their local health departments. For more information about the flu, visit CDPH Immunization Branch Website at www.GetImmunizedCA.org.

To find a flu clinic, visit the American Lung Association Web site at www.FluClinicLocator.org.

FLU VACCINE ORDER

State-Purchased			
Doses Ordered TOTAL	561,850		
Doses shipped 9/11	265,300		
Doses shipped 10/1	156,730		

Federal Purchase (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)			
Vaccines For Children Program			General Federal Funds
			Flu Mist
Doses allocated to CA	907,000		45,000
Doses available in inventory	210,250		0

This season's vaccine contains protection against three influenza strains:

- 1) A/Solomon Islands/3/2006 (H1N1)-like (new for this season),
- 2) A/Wisconsin/67/2005 (H3N2)-like
- 3) B/Malaysia/2506/2004-like antigens.